

Meeting Summary

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY COUNCIL

Chair: Dr. Robert Kavlock, Interim Science Advisor

Wednesday, December 3, 2014

1:00 – 3:00 p.m. EDT

STPC Members and Presenters: Robert Kavlock (ORD, EPA Interim Science Advisor and Chair), Robert Maxfield (Region 1), Kevin Kubik (for George Pavlou, Region 2), Ron Landy (for William Early, Region 3), Thomas Baugh (for Ann Heard, Region 4), Carole Braverman (for Bharat Mathur, Region 5), Michael Morton (for Sam Coleman, Region 6), Brenda Groskinsky (for Mark Hague, Region 7), Brenda Bettencourt (Region 9), Joyce Kelly (for Michelle Pirzadeh, Region 10), Khesha Reed (AO-OCHP), Al McGartland (AO-OP), Chris Zarba (AO-SABSO), Betsy Shaw (OAR), Donna Vizian (OARM), Joseph Greenblott (for David Bloom, OCFO), Louise Wise (OCSPP), Tom Norris (OECA), Monica Jones (for Ron Borsellino, OEI), Carol Ann Siciliano (for Kevin Minoli, OGC), Barry Hill (for Michael Stahl, OITA), Fred Hauchman (ORD), Barry Breen (OSWER), Ed Ohanian (for Mike Shapiro, OW).

Additional Presenters: Virginia Houk (NHEERL), Toby Schonfeld (OSA), Lara Phelps (OSA), Dan Axelrad (AO-OP), Dale Pahl (OSA), Jerry Blancato (ORD), Vincent Cogliano (ORD), Mary Greene (OSA)

Introductory Remarks:

Dr. Robert Kavlock (SA) welcomed the Science and Technology Policy Council (STPC) members and asked Anand Mudambi (OSA) to conduct the roll call. Dr. Kavlock made several announcements:

- The position for Director of OSA has been posted.
- The Science Advisor will meet with Dan and Bruce Duncan to discuss the request to have an additional STPC Steering Committee meeting, following the STPC meetings to discuss action items.

Project and program updates were provided by project leads:

- Virginia Houk (NHEERL) announced that the Peer Review Advisory Group (PRAG) is close to completely addressing all of the comments received on the draft *Peer Review Handbook, 4th Edition* from the Agencywide review (conducted through the STPC). The document will be sent for technical editing and then to the STPC for concurrence by early next year. Additionally, the PRAG is developing a Peer Review Handbook training course.
- Toby Schonfeld (Human Subjects Research Review Official) provided an update on the Agency's Human Subjects Research Program and its endeavor to build its capacity throughout the Agency. Currently, the Program and its members are identifying skills and

opportunities within the Agency to improve human subject research understanding and development.

- Robert Kavlock stated that the Council on Regulatory Environmental Modeling (CREM) has been sunsetted since there was no strong business case for continuing it. It has been replaced with the Environmental Modeling Community of Practice, led by Tom Norris (OECA). Lara Phelps (OSA) will be responsible for coordinating activities of the group. Tom Norris provided an update on the Modeling Community of Practice whose goal is to be a venue where Agency modelers can come together for knowledge transfer, information exchange and to share ideas. He stated that modelers within the Agency have already come together, identified themes of knowledge and advocated items that are important to the future of the Agency. A kick-off meeting for this community is scheduled for January 13, 2015 and an intranet website is being developed. A business case for this community of practice will be developed and presented to the STPC to verify STPC support.
- Dale Pahl (OSA) provided an update on the Laboratory Enterprise Study. An e-mail has been sent to the STPC members on December 2, requesting their comments on the EPA Synthesis report (which combines the recommendations from GAO, the NAS report on EPA's Laboratory Enterprise and the Smith Group's evaluation). Dale stated the draft Agency recommendations are being developed along with briefings for the Deputy Administrator and STPC members. A request for data on laboratory facilities has also been sent for Agency laboratories to provide their data (on facilities, personnel etc.) via an intranet site. A conference call is scheduled for December 10th with the laboratories to answer questions and discuss the data templates. The data entry will continue through March 30, 2015.

1. Public Access Plan: Next Steps

Highlights: Jerry Blancato (ORD) gave an update on ORD's pilot on data management regarding access to data that can be made public. Meta data associated with published data from 5-7 articles are being readied for public access by March 2015 followed by a study to see the usefulness of this metadata to users. At this time only data from EPA generated publications is being considered (not data from grants), which will be kept in house. The results from the pilot project will be used to identify Agency data gaps and areas for better data management. ORD is working on life cycle management of data produced by agency research. The plan is to have first order data from any ORD research available when the article is published by 2016.

2. Sustainability- NAS Report Recommendations

Highlights: Robert Kavlock requested the STPC Steering Committee to review the NAS Report "Sustainability Concepts in Decision-Making: Tools and Approaches for the US Environmental Protection Agency (2014)" and determine ongoing activities at the Agency that are responsive to the NAS recommendations and identify recommendations that need follow up activities, given EPA's constraints.

3. IRIS Agenda

Highlights: Vincent Coglianò (ORD) provided the STPC with an overview of the IRIS Agenda and stated that twenty-three IRIS assessments are currently in progress. The IRIS Program is proposing to meet representatives from programs and regions to develop a plan for starting specific new chemical assessments in 2015 as well as in the next 3-5 years. A meeting on December 15, 2014 will be held to reprioritize the original IRIS list of 70 chemicals. A final list of the chemicals for future Agency assessment will be sent for consensus by mid-January 2015.

4. Risk Assessment Activities

Highlights:

- Mary Greene (OSA) reviewed the CRA Potential Action Items, including the near term products. OSA is currently working on a proposal for assessment approaches for social stressors.
- Dan Axelrad (OP) stated that one of the CRA potential actions is for the SC to give a CRA briefing to the STPC. Briefing options are a broad overview of Agency CRA activities, or background on CRA concepts, key issues, what science supports in terms of policy. STPC decided they would like to hear both options.
- Ed Ohanian (OW) provided an update on the September 23-24, 2014 RAF Colloquium. A preliminary draft workplan for the next steps towards CRA Guidelines has been developed and comments from an RAF review were due November 20th. The final draft proposal from the RAF to the STPC/STPC SC will be complete in January 2015. Ed also provided an update on the November 4-6, 2014 RAF Uncertainty and Variability Colloquium, with the next steps to include finalizing the Current Practices Report and Resources Inventory, developing a Draft Action Plan by April 2015, and delivering the Final Action Plan to the STPC-SC in May 2015.

5. STPC/NRC Risk Assessments Reports Workgroup- STPC Support Received and New Project Discussion

Highlights: Leads have been identified for all activities except activity 3 (White Papers on Explicit Defaults in reference value methodology). Robert Kavlock thanked the STPC members for their support for all 6 activities and requested that the projects with leads identified be initiated.

6. Potential New STPC Topics

Highlights: Robert Kavlock opened the discussion on the potential new meeting topics submitted by STPC members. Members agreed that Items 1-7 and 13 (broadened to include both water and fish consumption surveys) merit further STPC discussion. There was general support to combine Items 4 and 5 and add 2 more topics: IRIS alternatives and emerging issues. The final list of 9 potential meeting topics will be sent for each office/region to review and rank as high, medium or low priority and to indicate the level of support for high priority topics.

7. Cross-Agency Science Issues for SAB Review

Highlights: Chris Zarba (SABSO) stated that the existing process for SAB to receive topics is from an annual call letter to the Agency, from topics/issues identified through the regulatory process, and from SAB member recommendations. He stated there is a need for identifying important, cross-EPA science issues. ORD will lead a process to identify priority cross-EPA topics starting with the six topics already identified from discussion with the Administrator and senior EPA managers, as well as additional topics identified by STPC members. A group for each topic will be formed to scope/frame the topic.

8. New Business

- Mike Shapiro presented an update on the FEM charge to the SAB, which included to seek opportunity for actionable items. A report is expected by spring.
- Dale Pahl presented an update on the proposal for NAS regarding social and behavioral sciences.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m. The next STPC meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2015, from 1:00 to 3:30 pm.

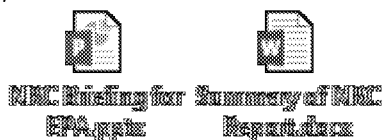
A. Meeting Action Items:

1. Sustainability – NAS Recommendations:

- a. The STPC Steering Committee will review the NAS Recommendations and do the following to be presented at the March 2015 STPC meeting:
 - i. Determine ongoing activities at the Agency that are responsive to the NAS Recommendations, and;
 - ii. Identify (and if possible, prioritize) recommendations that need follow up activities (given EPA's constraints).

The NAS Report "[Sustainability Concepts in Decision-Making: Tools and Approaches for the US Environmental Protection Agency \(2014\)](http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=18949)" is available at: <http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=18949>

The Briefing from NRC to EPA as well as a summary of the NRC Report are attached below.

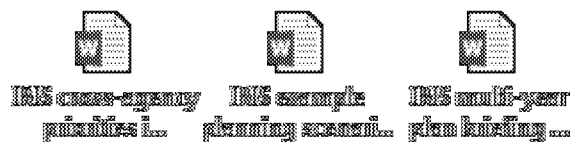


2. IRIS Multi-Year Plan Action Item (Meeting on Monday December 15):

As requested by NCEA's Agency partners, the IRIS Program will meet with representatives from programs and regions to develop and finalize a schedule of new assessments that IRIS will begin over the next several years. The meeting will occur **on Monday December 15, 2014 from 2 -4 PM ET**. Please identify a representative who understands and can speak for your organization's toxicity assessment needs.

Representative names should be sent to Vince Cogliano (cogliano.vincent@epa.gov) and Norman Birchfield (birchfield.norman@epa.gov).

Materials for the December 15th meeting are attached: 1. IRIS multi-year plan briefing sheet, 2. IRIS cross-agency priorities identified by programs and regions, 3. IRIS example planning scenarios.



3. Cross-Cutting Priority Science Issues for SAB Engagement (Action needed by Tuesday December 16):

Please identify a representative from your program to engage with ORD on the process for considering strategic science issues for potential SAB engagement. Please email their name to Sarah Mazur (mazur.sarah@epa.gov) by **Tuesday, December 16, 2014**.

ORD will then schedule a planning meeting with the identified representatives to develop and manage the cross-Agency effort to identify strategic science issues by March 2015.

4. NRC Risk Assessment Reports (Action needed by Friday January 16):

Attached is the latest summary of proposed support for the NRC Risk Assessment Reports Workgroup recommendations. Please note that we are still looking for lead for activity 3 (White Papers on Explicit Defaults in reference value methodology). If your office or region is interested in leading this effort, please send an e-mail to the STPC staff (stpc_staff@epa.gov) by **Friday, January 16, 2015**.



5. FEM Charge to the Science Advisory Board (Action needed by Friday January 16):

The FEM is writing a 30 – 50 page report to for the Science Advisory Board's (SAB) consideration as the SAB is charged to provide actionable recommendations for advancing measurement and monitoring science at the Agency over the next 5 – 10 years. If you or other key individuals or groups within your office would like to be interviewed or part of a brainstorming session to provide input for this report, please contact Lara Phelps (phelps.lara@epa.gov) by **Friday, January 16, 2015**.

6. STPC Meeting Potential Topics (Action needed by Friday January 23):

Please review and rank the topics and indicate the level of support for your high priority topics. Please send the information to the STPC Staff mailbox at stpc_staff@epa.gov by **Friday, January 23, 2015**.



B. Meeting Notes:

1. Human Subjects Research:
 - a. The Human Research Ethics Council's (HREC) Executive Committee is having a planning retreat the end of January 2015.
 - b. Suggestions for the HREC (including potential representatives) should be sent to the Agency's Human Subjects Research Review Official Dr. Toby Schonfeld (Schonfeld.toby@epa.gov).
2. Environmental Modeling Community of Practice: The 1st meeting is **Tuesday January 13, 2015 from 2:00 to 3:30 PM ET**. For more information, please contact Lara Phelps (phelps.lara@epa.gov) or go to the following website: <https://intranet.ord.epa.gov/p2/E-Mod/home>.
3. Cumulative Risk Assessment: STPC Steering Committee subgroup will be preparing a briefing for the STPC for their March 19, 2015 meeting that includes both key CRA concepts/issues and an overview of Agency CRA activities.